

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated October 30, 2003, having a shortened statutory period for response extended one month to expire on March 1, 2004. The drawings and the specification stand objected to. Claims 1-46 are pending in the application and stand rejected. Applicants have amended the claims shown above to particularly recite aspects of the invention or to correct matters of form that do not impact the patentability of the claims. Further, Applicants have amended base claim 1 to present original claim 6 in independent form, and have amended base claim 9 to present original claim 15 in independent form. Please reconsider the application for reasons presented below.

The drawings stand object to because they do not include the reference signs "137" and "154." The drawings also stand objected because they include reference signs "127" and "128" which are not mentioned in the specification. Applicants have amended paragraph [0032] as shown above to correctly refer to "brace 137" which is shown in Figure 1. The mention of "brace 127" in original paragraph [0032] was an unintentional typographical error. Applicants have also amended paragraph [0033] to include the description of the pneumatic cylinder 128 which was shown in Figure 1 but not mentioned in the written specification. Applicants submit that this correction does not add new matter since the cylinder 128 was clearly shown in the original Figure 1. Further, in regard to "154", Applicants submit that Figure 1 does show the reference sign and Applicants' have circled the "154" on the Attached Annotated Sheet for the Examiner's convenience. Applicants submit that all the drawing objections have been obviated for reasons stated above, and respectfully request withdrawal of the objections.

The specification stands objected to for containing informalities noted by the Examiner. Applicants have amended the specification as shown above to correct these informalities. Applicants have also amended the specification to correct other unintentional informalities contained in the specification. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added. Applicants also submit that the objections to the written

specification have been obviated, and withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Claim 44 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicants have cancelled claim 44 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein, thereby obviating this rejection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10, 12-22, 24-28, 31-32, 34-40, and 42-46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by *Sun et al.* (EP 1 103 346 A2). Claims 23, 30, and 33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Sun et al.* as applied to claim 17 above. Claims 11, 29 and 41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Sun et al.* as applied to claims 9 and 29 above, and further in view of *Easter et al.* (U.S. 6,368,190).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. *Sun et al.* discloses an end-point detection for ECMP by measuring and monitoring the electron charge of the electrolyte. That electron charge is measured by a coulometer. *Sun et al.* also discloses using a sensor 13 positioned adjacent the upper, polished surface of the workpiece 6 for determining an end-point of EMP by measuring and/or detecting a change in a physical (e.g. electrical) or optical property" of the workpiece, not the electrolyte as asserted by the Examiner. See *Sun et al.* at col. 10, lines 31-41.

Sun et al. does not teach, show, or suggest detecting at least one of an increase in a voltage and a decrease in a current of the electrical signal to determine the polishing endpoint of the electropolishing, as recited in the amended base claims 1 and 9 and claims dependent therefrom. *Sun et al.* does not teach, show, or suggest detecting the polishing endpoint of the electropolishing according to at least one of a voltage and a current of an electrical signal delivered through at least the electrolyte, as recited in base claim 17 and claims dependent therefrom. Further, *Sun et al.* does not teach, show, or suggest an endpoint detection system configured to monitor an increase in a voltage or a decrease in a current of the electrical signal to detect a polishing endpoint, as recited in base claim 27 and claims dependent therefrom. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The secondary references made of record are noted. However, it is believed that the secondary references are no more pertinent to the Applicant's disclosure than the primary references cited in the office action. Therefore, Applicant believes that a detailed discussion of the secondary references is not necessary for a full and complete response to this office action.

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



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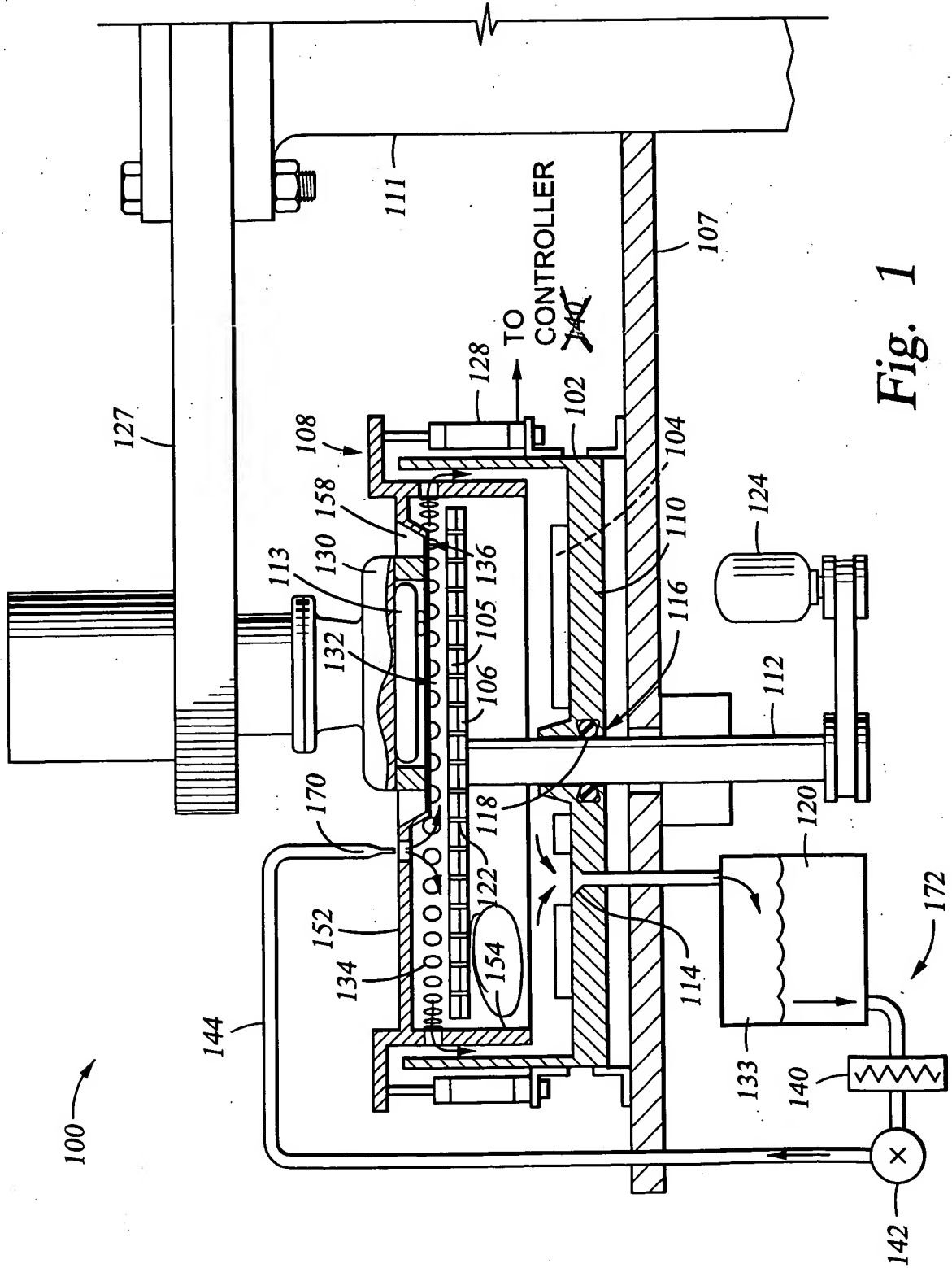
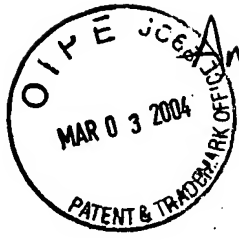


Fig. 1